

Mr. Flanders Talks

Once More a Well-Known Citizen of Flint Adds His Endorsement.

Success always brings with it enthusiasm, and from all parts of the city enthusiastic people are sounding their praises of the work of the little conqueror, Mr. G. D. Flanders in the well-known grocer, at 521 N. Saginaw Street, and that the statement he makes here is true in every particular, goes without saying. This is what he says:

"For as long as four years I suffered from pains across my back over the kidneys, was that old backache, sometimes better and sometimes worse. Anyone who has experienced such a pain will understand how distressing it is. I was continually annoyed by its presence. I knew the kidneys were at fault, as there were other signs of kidney disorder. That pain across the kidneys had become very constant. If I accidentally jarred myself, I would feel it much worse for a time. One day I happened to read about a remedy for the kidneys called Doan's Kidney Pills. I determined to try them, so I went to Dullam Bros. drug store and procured a box. I had taken only a few doses when I felt relief from the pain. I continued to use them, taking altogether three boxes, and they have cured me. The backache is entirely removed and I have felt as good since as I ever did in my life. Doan's Kidney Pills are truly a kidney cure. As long as I have a chance I shall recommend and speak a good word for them, advising others to use them."

Everywhere you go 'tis just the same as this. No article or medicine has ever caused such a stir in the world from its extraordinary properties as has Doan's Kidney Pills. People call them "The little conquerors of kidney trouble." "The little specialists." "The little enemies to backache," and many other such names, and they have good reason to. Doan's Kidney Pills are for sale by all dealers—price 50 cents per box. Mailed by Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y., sole agents for the United States. Remember the name, Doan's, and take no other.

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THE GREAT K&A TRAIN ROBBERY.

PAUL LEICESTER FORD

AUTHOR OF "THE HONORABLE PETER STIRLING, ETC."

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CHAPTER III.

A NIGHT'S WORK ON THE ALKALI PLAINS.

I hurried Miss Cullen into the car, and, after bolting the rear door, took down my Winchester from its rack.

"I'm going forward," I told her, "and will tell my boys to bolt the front door; so you'll be as safe in here as in Chicago."

In another minute I was on my front platform. Dropping down between the two cars, I crept along beside—indeed half under—Mr. Cullen's special. After my previous conclusion, my surprise can be judged when at the farther end I found the two Britishers and Albert Cullen standing there, in the most exposed position possible. I joined them, muttering to myself something about Providence and fools.

"Aw," drawled Cullen, "here's Mr. Gordon, just too late for the sport, by Jove."

"Well," said Lord Ralles, "we've had a hand in this deal, Mr. Superintendent, and haven't been potted. The soundrels broke for cover the moment we opened fire."

By this time there were 20 passengers about our group, all of them asking questions at once, making it difficult to learn just what had happened, so far as I could piece the answers together the poker players' curiosity had been aroused by the long stop, and, looking out, they had seen a single man, with a rifle, standing by the engine. Instantly arming themselves, Lord Ralles let fly both barrels at him, and in turn was the target for the first four shots I had heard. The shooting had brought the rest of the robbers tumbling off the cars, and the captain and Cullen had fired the rest of the shots at them as they scattered. I didn't stop to hear more, but went forward to see what the road agents had got away with.

I found the express agent tied hand and foot in the corner of his car, and, telling a brakeman who had followed me to set him at liberty, I turned my attention to the safe. That the diversion had not come a moment too soon was shown by the dynamite cartridge already in place and by the fuse that lay on the floor, as if dropped suddenly. But the safe was intact.

Passing into the mail car, I found the clerk tied to a post, with a mail sack pulled over his head, and the utmost confusion among the pouches and sorting compartments, while scattered over the floor were a great many letters. Setting him at liberty, I asked him if he could tell whether mail had been taken, and, after a glance at the confusion, he said he could not know till he had examined.

Having taken stock of the harm done, I began asking questions. Just after we had left Sanders two masked men had entered the mail car and while one covered the clerk with a revolver the other had tied and "sacked" him. Two more had gone forward and done the same to the express agent. Another had climbed over the tender and ordered the runner to hold up. All this was the regular programme, as I had explained to Miss Cullen, but here had been a variation which I had never heard of being done and of which I couldn't fathom the object. When the train had been stopped, the man on the tender had ordered the fireman to dump his fire, and now it was lying in the roadbed and threatening to burn through the ties, so my first order was to extinguish it and my second was to start a new fire and get up steam as quickly as possible. From all I could learn there were eight men concerned in the attempt, and I confess I shook my head in puzzlement why that number should have allowed themselves to be scared off so easily.

My wonderment grew when I called on the conductor for his tickets. These showed nothing but two from Albuquerque, one from Laguna and four from Coolidge. This latter would have looked hopeful but for the fact that it was a party of three women and a man. Going back beyond Lamy didn't give anything, for the conductor was able to account for every fare as either still in the train or as having got off at some point. My only conclusion was that the robbers had sneaked on to the platforms at Sanders, and I gave the crew a good dressing down for their carelessness. Of course they insisted it was impossible, but they were bound to do that.

Going back to 87, I got my telegraph

instrument, though I thought it a waste of time, the road agents being always careful to break the lines. I told a brakeman to climb the pole and cut a wire. While he was struggling up, Miss Cullen joined me.

"Do you really expect to catch them?" she asked.

"I shouldn't like to be one of them," I replied.

"But how can you do it?"

"You could understand better, Miss Cullen, if you knew this country. You see every bit of water is in use by ranches, and those fellows can't go more than 50 miles without watering. So we shall have word of them, wherever they go."

"Line cut, Mr. Gordon," came from overhead at this point, making Miss Cullen jump with surprise.

"What was that?" she asked.

I explained to her, and, after making connections, I called Sanders. Much to my surprise, the agent responded. I was so astonished that for a moment I could not believe the fact.

"This is the queerest hold up of which I ever heard," I said to Miss Cullen.

"Aw, in what respect?" asked Albert Cullen's voice, and, looking up, I found that he and quite a number of the passengers had joined us.

"The road agents make us dump our fire," I said, "and yet they haven't cut the wires in either direction. I can't see how they can escape us."

"What fun!" cried Miss Cullen.

"I don't see what difference either makes in their chance of escaping," said Lord Ralles.

While he was speaking I ticked off the news of our being held up and asked the agent if there had been any men about Sanders, or if he had seen any one board the train there. His answer was positive that no one could have done so, and that settled it as to Sanders. I asked the same questions of Allantown, and

it was so dark that I had some difficulty in finding the pole. When I found it, Miss Cullen was still standing there. What was more, a man was close beside her, and as I came up I heard her say, indignantly:

"I will not allow it. It is unfair to take such advantage of me. Take your arm away or I shall call for help!"

That was enough for me. One step carried my 160 pounds over the intervening ground, and, using the momentum of the stride to help, I put the flat of my hand against the shoulder of the man and gave him a shove. There are three or four Harvard men who can tell what that means, and they were braced for it, which this fellow wasn't. He went staggering back as if struck by a cowcatcher and lay down on the ground a good 15 feet away. His having his arm around Miss Cullen's waist unsteadied her so that she would have fallen, too, if I hadn't put my hand against her shoulder. I longed to put it about her, but by this time I wanted to do only what I thought she would wish and so restrained myself.

Before I had time to finish an apology to Miss Cullen the fellow was upon his feet and came at me with an exclamation of anger. In my surprise at recognizing the voice as that of Lord Ralles I almost neglected to take care of myself; but, though he was quick with his fists, I caught him by the wrists as he closed, and he had no chance after that against a fellow of my weight.

"Oh, don't quarrel!" cried Miss Cullen.

Holding him, I said, "Lord Ralles, I overheard what Miss Cullen was saying, and supposing some man was insulting her I acted as I did." Then I let go of him and, turning, said, "I am very sorry, Miss Cullen, if I did anything the circumstances did not warrant," while cursing myself for my precipitancy and for not thinking that Miss Cullen would never have been caught in such a plight with a man unless she had been half willing, for a girl does not merely threaten to call for help if she really wants aid.

Lord Ralles wasn't much mollified by my explanation. "You're too much in a hurry, my man," he growled, speaking to me as if I were a servant. "Be a bit more careful in the future."

I think I should have retorted—for his manner was enough to make a saint mad—if Miss Cullen hadn't spoken.

"You tried to help me, Mr. Gordon, and I am deeply grateful for that," she said. The words look simple enough set down here. But the tone in which she said them and the extended hand and the grateful little squeeze she gave my fingers all seemed to express so much that I was more puzzled over them than I was over the robbery.

SOME RATHER QUEER ROAD AGENTS.

"You had better come back to the car, Miss Cullen," remarked Lord Ralles after a pause.

But she declined to do so, saying she wanted to know what I was going to telegraph. And he left us, for which I wasn't sorry. I told her of the good news I had to send, and she wanted to know if now we would try to catch the road agents. I set her mind at rest on that score.

"I think they'll give us very little trouble to bag," I added, "for they are so green that it's almost pitiful."

"In not cutting the wires?" she asked.

"In everything," I replied. "But the worst bet is their waiting till we had just passed the Arizona line. If they had held us up an hour earlier, it would only have been state's prison."

"And what will it be now?"

"Hanging."

"What?" cried Miss Cullen.

"In New Mexico train robbery is not capital, but in Arizona it is," I told her. "And if you catch them they'll be hung!" she asked.

"Yes."

"That seems very hard."

The first signs of dawn were beginning to show by this time, and as the sky brightened I told Miss Cullen that I was going to look for the trail of the fugitives. She said she would walk with me, if not in the way, and my assurance was very positive on that point. And here I want to remark that it's saying a good deal if a girl can be up all night in such excitement and still look fresh and pretty, and that she did.

I ordered the crew to look about, and then began a big circle around the train. Finding nothing, I swung a bigger one. That being equally unavailing, I did a larger third. Not a trace of foot or hoof within a half mile of the cars! I had heard of blankets laid down to conceal a trail of swathed feet, even of leather horse boots with cattle hoofs on the bottom, but none of these could have been used for such a distance, let alone the entire absence of any signs of a place where the horses had been hobbled. Returning to the train, the report of the men was the same.

"We've ghost road agents to deal with, Miss Cullen," I laughed. "They come from nowhere, bullets touch them not, their lead hurts nobody, they take nothing, and they disappear without touching the ground."

"How curious it is!" she exclaimed. "One would almost suppose it a dream."

"Hold on," I said. "We do have something tangible, for if they disappeared they left their shells behind them."

And I pointed to some cartridge shells that lay on the ground beside the mail car. "My theory of aerial bullets won't do."

"The shells are as hollow as I feel," laughed Miss Cullen.

"Your suggestion reminds me that I am desperately hungry," I said. "Suppose we go back and end the famine."

Most of the passengers had long since returned to their seats or berths, and Mr. Cullen's party had apparently done the same, for 218 showed no signs of life. One of my darlings was awake, and he broiled a steak and made us some coffee in no time, and just as they were ready Albert Cullen appeared. So we made a very jolly little breakfast. He told me at length the part he and the Britishers had borne and only made me

Wingate, which were the only places we had stopped at after leaving Coolidge, getting the same answers. That eight men could have remained concealed on any of the platforms from that point was impossible, and I began to suspect magic. Then I called Coolidge and told of the hold up, after which I telegraphed the agent at Navajo Springs to notify the commander at Fort Defiance, for I suspected the road agents would make for the Navajo reservation. Finally I called Flagstaff as I had Coolidge, directed that the authorities be notified of the facts and ordered a special to bring out the sheriff and posse.

"I don't think," said Miss Cullen, "that I am a bit more curious than most people, but it has nearly made me frantic to have you tick away on that little machine and hear it tick back and not understand a word."

After that I had to tell her what I had said and learned.

"How clever of you to think of counting the ticks and finding out where people got on and off! I never should have thought of either," she said.

"It hasn't helped me much," I laughed rather grimly, "except to eliminate every possible clue."

"They probably did steal on at one of the stops," said a passenger.

I shook my head. "There isn't a stick of timber nor a place of concealment on these alkali plains," I replied, "and it was bright moonlight till an hour ago. It would be hard enough for one man to get within a mile of the station without being seen, and it would be impossible for seven or eight."

"How do you know the number?" asked a passenger.

"I don't," I said. "That's the number the crew think there were, but I myself don't believe it."

"Why don't you believe the men?" asked Miss Cullen.

"First, because there is always a tendency to magnify, and next, because the road agents ran away so quickly."

"I counted at least seven," said Lord Ralles.

"Well, Lord Ralles," I said, "I don't want to dispute your eyesight, but if they had been that strong they would never have bolted, and if you want to lay a bottle of wine I'll wager that when I catch those chaps we'll find there weren't more than three or four of them."

"Done!" said he.

Leaving the group, I went forward to get the report of the mail agent. He had put things to rights and told me that, though the mail had been pretty badly mixed up, only one pouch at worst had been rifled. This, the one for registered mail, had been cut open; but, as if to increase the mystery, the letters had been scattered, unopened, about the car, only three out of the whole being missing, and those very probably had fallen into the pigeonholes and would be found on a more careful search.

I confess I breathed easier to think that the road agents had got away with nothing, and was so pleased that I went back to the wire to send the news of it that the fact might be included in the press dispatches. The moon had set, and

it was so dark that I had some difficulty in finding the pole. When I found it, Miss Cullen was still standing there. What was more, a man was close beside her, and as I came up I heard her say, indignantly:

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marvel the more that any one of them was alive, for apparently they had jumped off the car without the slightest precaution and had stood grouped together even after they had called attention to themselves by Lord Ralles' shots. Cullen had to confess that he heard the whistle of the four bullets unpleasantly close.

"You have a right to be proud, Mr. Cullen," I said. "You fellows did a tremendously plucky thing, and, thanks to you, we didn't lose anything."

"But you went to help, too, Mr. Gordon," said Miss Cullen.

That made me color up, and after a moment's hesitation I said:

"I'm not going to stand under false colors, Miss Cullen. When I went forward, I didn't think I could do anything. I supposed whoever had pitched into the robbers was dead, and I expected to be the same inside of ten minutes."

"Then why did you risk your life," she asked, "if you thought it was useless?"

I laughed, and, though ashamed to tell it, said, "I didn't want you to think that the Britishers had more pluck than I had."

She took my confession better than I hoped she would, laughing with me, and then said, "Well, that was courageous, after all."

"Yes," I said. "I was frightened into bravery."

"Perhaps if they had known the danger as well as you, they would have been less courageous," she continued. And I could have blessed her for the speech.

While we were still eating, the mail clerk came to my car and reported that the most careful search had failed to discover the three registered letters, and they had evidently been taken. This made me feel sober, slight as the probable loss was. He told me that his list showed they were all addressed to Ash Fork